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ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE DIRECTOR OF
PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD
WASHINGTON

*Regraded UNCLASSIFIED
when separated from
classified inclosures*

January 6, 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: General W. Bedell Smith
Director of Central Intelligence

Enclosed is a short paper on what PSB has
done. You might like to keep this for your office
files.

agk

Alan G. Kirk.

Enclosure:

D/D-24, 12/31/52
Cy #3.

NSC review(s) completed.

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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December 31, 1952

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

I. ORIGINS

The Psychological Strategy Board was created to fill two principal needs. The first of these was the need, as the conflict with the USSR intensified after 1948, for an interdepartmental board of sub-Cabinet stature which could effectively coordinate the planning for State, Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency for their growing information and propaganda programs, and mobilize a national psychological effort employing the full resources of the Government. The second need was that of providing a means of obtaining agreement between State and Defense as to more precise program objectives in support of NSC's goals, for guidance to CIA in conducting covert operations in fields other than that of propaganda.

II. ESTABLISHMENT

The Board was established on April 4, 1951, by a secret Presidential Directive which made it responsible "for the formulation and promulgation, as guidance to the departments and agencies responsible for psychological operations, of over-all national psychological objectives, policies and programs, and for the coordination and evaluation of the national psychological effort".

Psychological operations were defined as including all activities envisioned under the two NSC directives, which authorized the Government's foreign information and propaganda programs, and which authorized certain covert activities.

Named to the Board were the Under Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence. The President subsequently authorized the attendance at Board meetings of the Director of Mutual Security.

The Board was given a staff under a Director appointed by the President.

Finally, the Directive stated that neither the Board nor the Director would "perform any psychological operations" but would "utilize to the maximum extent the facilities and resources of the participating departments and agencies".

III. ACCOMPLISHMENT

After a short organizational period, the Board and its Staff went to work on those substantive problems which came within its mission. These fell roughly into the following main categories:

A. THE REDUCTION OF COMMUNIST POWER

1. The Succession to Stalin

In the past many attempts have been made to develop plans to accentuate and exploit the difficulties which might attend the passing of power by Stalin to his successor. A program of psychological preparation for this event was approved by the Board and work under it is going forward.

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2. Priorities for and Objectives of Covert Activity

Since the agency charged with the responsibility for carrying on covert operations over a wide area of activity has been handicapped in its forward planning by too generalized statements of national policy, the effort was made to prepare reasonably precise guidelines. This resulted in a paper approved by the Board in the summer of 1952. Implementation of the conclusions set forth in this paper is proceeding satisfactorily.

3. Exploitation of Defectors and Escapees

Although, again, the NSC had called for action to maximize the impact on the Soviet orbit of certain types of defection, further action was needed in order better to exploit this Soviet vulnerability. PSB plans were approved in December 1951 calling for the use of Kersten Amendment funds to improve the reception, care, resettlement and utilization of the escapees and defectors then crossing the curtain. A further plan with respect to escapees from the Soviet orbit (Phase B) has now been completed and is scheduled for submission to the Board at its next meeting on January 15, 1953. This second phase provides basic guidance on action to increase the flow of certain types of escapees and defectors and to exploit their military and other potentials.

4. Doctrinal Warfare

Again, it had long been felt that an effective attack can be made on the ideological assumptions underlying the Soviet system. After several staff studies had opened up convincing possibilities in this field, the Board authorized formal planning. A panel has been formed and has begun its work. A progress report by the panel will be submitted to the Board at its January 15 meeting.

5. The Korean War

At the outset of the Board's activities, the President requested a psychological plan which, depending on events, would exploit either the successful conclusion of Korean negotiations or their breakdown. A plan for each contingency received Board approval in the fall of 1951, and thereafter the staff has assisted the agencies in preparing necessary supporting programs. Overt operational planning under these programs is now substantially complete, and covert operational planning is currently being revised.

6. Reduction in Communist Power in France and Italy

Although this had long been an NSC objective, the need existed for interdepartmental agreement on courses of action to attain the objective. Papers were agreed upon in the early winter of 1952 setting forth a number of specific actions as guidance for the Embassies in Paris and Rome and the operating agencies in Washington. This effort has been monitored by an interdepartmental panel in Washington and its counterparts in the Embassies.

7. East-West Trade

An effort to develop a program which, without endangering our security, could call the Soviet bluff in its demands for East-West trade is continuing. This program would be limited to the non-strategic lists.

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8. Germ Warfare

U. S. psychological plans to counter Soviet germ warfare charges, and the Soviet Hate-America Campaign generally, were embodied in a staff study and approved by the Board. A working group set up under POC reports progress and a paper is expected soon.

B. FREE WORLD BUILD-UP

With the emergence of Germany and Japan from occupational status, the National Security Council recognized the importance of holding these anchor points within the Western security structure and insuring their anti-Soviet orientation. At the same time, it was recognized that the contestable underdeveloped areas of the world lying in a great arc through Southeast Asia and the Middle East required similar anti-Soviet orientation. In early 1952, the Board accordingly directed preparation of psychological strategy plans for Germany, Japan, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East.

The German Plan, which aims at the integration of the Federal Republic into the European Defense Community, has been successfully completed and is being implemented. A supplement dealing with the special problem of Berlin is practically complete, and, it is hoped, will be ready for presentation to the Board at its January 15 meeting. The Japan Plan, which envisages psychological operations necessary to maximize Japan's contribution to the attainment of U. S. objectives in Asia, has been successfully completed and fully coordinated, and is now out for approval by vote-slip. The Southeast Asia Plan, designed to prevent the free countries of the region from passing into the communist orbit, is virtually complete, and is also scheduled for submission to the Board for approval at the January 15 meeting. Similarly, the Middle East Plan, which is designed to prevent the extension of Soviet influence in that area and to insure the availability of resources to the U. S. and its allies for use in strengthening the free world, has been completed and is scheduled for submission at the next meeting of the Board.

Key evaluation studies on (a) the effect of the U. S. psychological effort in Italy since 1946 and (b) the psychological impact of the U.S. foreign economic program in the United Kingdom will be presented to the Board for approval at the January 15 meeting. It is believed that these intensive soundings will yield useful clues for dealing with stresses and strains now causing excessive concern in large parts of the free world.

C. PLANNING FOR GENERAL HOSTILITIES

At the request of the National Security Council, PSB prepared a plan which set forth the functions in the fields of psychological strategy and operations to be carried out by civil and military agencies, including PSB, in the event of general war, and the means of bringing about the necessary transfers of personnel and facilities. After approval by the Board, this plan was submitted to the National Security Council and was approved by the President as NSC 127/1.

In addition to this organizational and functional paper, the Board approved a Propaganda Policy Guidance setting forth the lines to be followed in the event of war with the USSR.

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Since there exists in Government no formal means of obtaining an objective evaluation and analysis of the success of the United States' programs in the struggle with the USSR, considerable emphasis has been placed by the Board on this responsibility.

The responsibilities in PSB for evaluative reporting are fourfold:

1. Evaluative summaries and conclusions in the Board's reports to the NSC on the status and progress of the national psychological effort.
2. Evaluation and analysis of our successes and failures in certain areas and functions.
3. Evaluative reporting in the form of intelligence support for planning.
4. Evaluative reporting in the form of briefings on current intelligence for the Director and Staff.

IV. DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

The Board and its Staff have encountered the usual difficulties which face all new interdepartmental bodies. In PSB's case these were accentuated to some extent by the general language of its Charter which made uncertain the Board's actual role and made stronger provision for restraint than for initiative. The Charter could either be interpreted broadly to call for a sort of junior NSC interested substantively in all aspects of the struggle with the USSR, or it could be construed narrowly to authorize merely a higher-level coordinating committee in the field of propaganda. Although the Board chose neither extreme in the projects which it undertook, this question has never been satisfactorily answered and much staff time has been lost as a result. Similarly, the related problem of how to expedite decision has been troublesome. Whether it be in planning, coordination or evaluation, substantive staff efforts have naturally encountered basic divergencies of view. Since every important paper has to clear through at least three agencies before presentation to the Board, it is not surprising that major plans, for example, are taking about a year to reach the implementation stage.

V. NEW TASKS

As work on the projects described above in Section III neared completion preliminary surveys were begun by the Director and Staff, in collaboration with agency staffs, looking toward the development of plans on the following topics:

A. SOVIET ORBIT

1. Soviet Union: A renewed attack on the central problem as a whole.
 - (a) Soviet Armed Forces: Intensification of disaffection.
(Perhaps to be developed as one part of the comprehensive USSR plan.)
2. Communist China.
3. European Satellites.

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B. UNSTABLE OR CONTESTABLE AREAS

1. Indian Sub-continent.
2. French and Spanish North Africa.
3. Africa South of the Sahara.
4. Latin American Danger-Spots.

C. WESTERN WORLD

1. Western Europe: Reduction of tensions and hostility toward United States policies.

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